Message Text

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ACTION ARA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3438

CONFIDENTIAL SANTO DOMINGO 1708

LIMDIS

DEPT PLEASE PASS INFO ARA POSTS

FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS TAGS: PINT, DR

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH PRESIDENT BALAGUER: LA SUGAR PRODUCERS

AT PUERTO PLATA

1. DURING MEETING WITH PRESIDENT BALAGUER I RAISED THE SUBJECT OF THE LA SUGAR PRODUCERS' MEETING AT PUERTO PLATA. AFTER ALLUDING TO HIS FEB 27 POLICY STATEMENT, I EX-PRESSED SOME CONCERN THAT THERE MIGHT EMERGE FROM THE PUERTO PLATA MEETING A SUGAR PRICE-FIXING SCHEME UNILATERALLY DEVISED BY THE PRODUCERS. BALAGUER REPLIED THAT THE GODR WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE PARTY TO ANY SUCH ARRANGEMENT AND WOULD DO ITS UTMOST TO PREVENT ITS COMING INTO BEING. HE CONTINUED THAT HE REGARDED THE MEETING TO BE A TECHNICAL ONE WHICH HE WOULD NOT ATTEND. HE THOUGHT THAT MEANS SHOULD BE DEVISED AT THE MEETING FOR BROADER EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION REGARDING CURRENT AND FUTURE MARKET CONDITIONS. EVENTUALLY, AFTER CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION BETWEEN CONSUMERS AND PRODUCERS SOME METHOD OF STABILIZING, BUT NOT FIXING, PRICES MIGHT BE FOUND TO BE FEASIBLE IN ORDER TO AVOID "BOOM OR BUST" CYCLES. IN THIS REGARD, HE FOUND THE U.S. POSITION AT THE COFFEE MEETING AS REPORTED IN THE LOCAL PRESS TO BE CONSTURCTIVE AND PERHAPS CONFIDENTIAL

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APPLICABLE TO SUGAR AS WELL.

- 2. I SUGGESTED THAT, IN ADDITION TO THE EQUITIES OF BOTH CONSUMER AND PRODUCER, A THIRD IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION WAS THAT OF REALISTIC PRICES I.E. THOSE THAT WERE NOT SO ARTIFICALLY HIGH AS TO STIMULATE SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION AND/OR SUBSTITUTES. THE PRESIDENT AGREED THAT IT WAS A COMPLEX PROBLEM ABOUT WHICH CONSIDERABLY MORE KNOWLEDGE WAS REQUIRED BEFORE DECIDING HOW BEST TO PROTECT EVERY ONE'S INTEREST.
- 3. BALAGUER APPEARED CONFIDENT THAT MOST COUNTRIES ATTENDING WOULD ADOPT MODERATE AND CAUTIOUS POSTURES WITH RESPECT TO ANY DISCUSSION OF PRICING MECHANISM THAT MIGHT ARISE. CUBA AND PERHAPS MEXICO ("RADICAL" COUNTRIES IN HIS VIEW) MIGHT TRY TO PUSH FOR PRICE AGREEMENTS, BUT HE DOUBTED THAT THEY WOULD SUCCEED. HURWITCH

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSEED ARA POSTS.

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Subject: MEETING WITH PRESIDENT BALAGUER: LA SUGAR PRODUCERS AT PUERTO PLATA

TAGS: PINT, DR, XM, (BALAGUER, JOAQUIN)
To: STATE

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